OCCUPATIONAL
# HEALTH & SAFETY
MAY 2009

## EDUCATING YOUNG WORKERS ON SAFETY

Also inside: 2009 Workplace Health and Safety Award Winners

EMPLOYMENT.ALBERTA.CA/WHS-OHSMAG

# YOUNG WORKERS CAN MISS THE HEALTH AND SAFETY MESSAGE

**by Glyn Jones**

A question that challenges us all is how to talk to young people about health and safety and be sure they are listening and hearing us. The statistics prove that the workplace health and safety message is just not getting through, especially to our young men. Indeed, generalized across all industries, young workers are almost twice as likely as the average worker to be injured at work. Young men are more than three times as likely to be injured as their female counterparts (Work Safe Alberta). These injuries are happening in almost every sector in our economy, and most of them occur within the first six months of work.

The current message being sent out through health and safety programs, new hire training and other initiatives is that "Safety is Number 1!" In spite of the effort to make this message loud and clear, it is still not being heard. What is going on here? Why isn't the message getting through?

**Communication barriers**

I believe young workers don't hear us because our messaging is wrong. It is a problem of differing values, ambitions, views, mindsets and demographics, and differences in the way we communicate. We live in a time when three distinct generations are at work: the Baby Boomers (Boomers), the Gen Xers and the Nexters (also called Gen Y or the Echo Boom). The way each group communicates and wants to be heard is very different.

The Boomers are in charge of the boardrooms of corporate Canada, and they and the Gen Xers are the front line managers and supervisors. An ominous cavern exists between the Nexters and their managers and supervisors. The Boomers and Gen Xers need to learn to speak a new language and be heard by the Nexters. The current message being sent out is in a language foreign to the Nexters, *and they are paying the price for our error.*

Boomers think Nexters need to be more disciplined, and Gen Xers think Nexters are a bunch of self-absorbed, spoiled brats. The truth is the Nexters want to get along and not just hang out; rather they like to network. They are a principled group; they are optimistic about the future and realistic about the present. They combine a can-do attitude with the teamwork ethic of the Boomers and a technological savvy the Gen Xers admire.

**Supervision, structure and discipline**

There is evidence that this group is more easily intimidated by co-workers, and they may need more supervision doing otherwise simple, common-sense tasks. They would appreciate a workplace with more structure, and they require discipline. This will be a big change for a workplace that has just learned to adapt to the Gen Xers, who were exactly the opposite. We spent the last 15 years reshaping our workplace for the Gen Xers. We need to recognize the need for further change to accommodate the Nexters.

How can we talk to Nexters about health and safety and be sure they are listening and hearing us? Follow these simple suggestions:

- Talk more often and budget more time for orientation and instruction on seemingly everyday tasks. (Remember, these kids grew up in front of computers.)
- Provide strong leadership and mentorship to guide them through the first six months. Consider matching your most seasoned people with them; it's probably a natural fit.
- Recognize the communication gap between Gen Xers and Nexters. Help them bridge the communication gap.
- Provide training, training and training. Nexters not only want the training—they need it!

The problem of youth injuries is real, and communication is the key to solving this problem. We need to start customizing our communication methods and processes for all the generations at work, including the Nexters!

*Glyn Jones, M.A.Sc., P.Eng., CIH, CRSP, is an occupational health and safety consultant and leadership coach. He is a partner in the consulting firm EHS Partnerships Ltd. in Calgary, Alberta.*

Please see feature story on how to keep young workers safe on page 17.

If you're interested in sharing opinions or comments about workplace health and safety issues, please contact the magazine's editor through the WHS Contact Centre, 1-866-415-8690 (or 780-415-8690, if you are in the Edmonton area), or e-mail whs@gov.ab.ca.

OCCUPATIONAL
# HEALTH & SAFETY

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# NEW HORIZONS IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

THE 2009

## ALBERTA HEALTH & SAFETY CONFERENCE AND TRADE FAIR

**Calgary Stampede Round Up Centre**
**October 26–28, 2009**

**Over 30 educational sessions** offered on a variety of topics relating to health and safety in all industries across Alberta.

This year's technical stream is about personal protective equipment.

**Over 130 exhibitors** will attend the trade fair this year, showcasing the latest in health, safety and environmental products and services.

**OVER 50 PER CENT SOLD OUT ALREADY!**
Trade fair registration is ongoing.

Delegate registration begins in late May.

Health & Safety Conference Society of Alberta

For more information, visit
www.hsconference.com

## FAMILY FORUM HELD IN ALBERTA

threads OF LIFE
Association for Workplace Tragedy Family Support

The second Alberta Family Forum will be held on October 23 to 25, 2009, in Kananaskis Country. The forum is held by Threads of Life, a national charitable organization. The group is dedicated to helping families who have lost someone to a workplace fatality or occupational disease or have a family member who has suffered a life-altering injury.

Sessions and workshops will be held throughout the weekend at the Delta Lodge in Kananaskis. The weekend begins with a welcome dinner on Friday night.

*To reserve a place, please contact Threads of Life by September 15, 2009. For more information, go to www.threadsoflife.ca or www.stepsforlife.ca or call 1-888-567-9490.*

## NEW VERSION OF YOUNG WORKERS ZONE

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has launched a new version of its young workers website, Young Workers Zone. This redesigned website is a resource for young workers, teachers, parents and employers that includes a collection of information and tools from organizations across Canada.

The Young Workers Zone is found at www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers.

*For more information on young worker safety, please see our feature story on p. 17.*

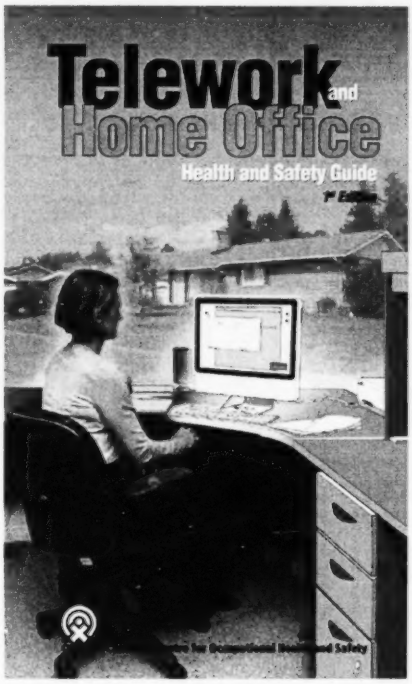
## NEW GUIDE ON HOW TO WORK FROM HOME

How do you work safely from your home office? Working outside of traditional workplaces is much more common than even five years ago. A new pocket guide by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety outlines the importance of work organization, ergonomics, and other safety and security needs that apply to working at home.

The Telework and Home Office Health and Safety Guide also discusses implementing a comprehensive health and safety program for teleworkers and home-based workers.

This 117-page guide includes charts, diagrams and checklists. It provides information such as how to integrate health and safety into everyday practices, ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and due diligence, and manage a telework position so the arrangement works best for both the employee and employer.

*For more information, see www.ccohs.ca/products/publications/telework.html.*




*More News and Notes on p. 6.*

*Continued from p. 5.*

## REMEMBERING THOSE WE HAVE LOST

The National Day of Mourning was observed once again on April 28, 2009. Every year Canadians gather at ceremonies across the country to honour and remember workers injured or killed on the job or from occupational disease. This day is also a time every year to remember workers' families and to commit to keeping all workers safe.

## OHS CODE UPDATED

The 2009 version of the Occupational Health and Safety Code has been enacted. Alberta employers have until July 1, 2009, to comply with the updates to the Code. The provisions of the 2006 Code will remain in effect until July 1 in order to allow employers and workers time to implement the required changes.

Updates to the OHS Code include the following:

- new requirements for lift calculations, tag lines and personnel baskets
- requirements specific to patient/client/resident handling
- new requirements for dealing with medical sharps
- entry permit systems for "confined" and "restricted" spaces
- requirements for respiratory protection against airborne biohazardous material
- requirements specifically aimed at concrete pump trucks
- new standards for rigging components
- updated mining practices

The 2009 OHS Code can be found online at employment.alberta.ca/whs-ohs.

The 2009 OHS Code Explanation Guide will be available online at this site in June 2009.

*Copies of the 2009 OHS Code can be purchased from the Queen's Printer at (780) 427-4952 (toll-free dial 310-0000, then the area code and telephone number) or online at www.qp.alberta.ca.*

## STAY UP TO DATE ON WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Alberta Workplace Health and Safety publishes a number of online bulletins every month. You can find the full list at employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/136.html. Here is part of one recent offering.

**Working Safely with Propane-fuelled Water Heaters and Boilers**

Recently, a number of serious injuries and considerable property loss resulted from the explosion of propane-fuelled water heaters and boilers mounted inside mobile carpet and upholstery cleaning vehicles.

Propane is a colourless, odourless gas. A distinctly strong odour, resembling rotten eggs, is added to propane so that a person can detect that the gas is present, such as from a leak. Propane is heavier than air and will drift into low-lying areas. Outdoors, air currents usually dissipate propane vapour, and it poses little danger. However, under calm conditions and in enclosed spaces, propane vapour can remain in low-lying areas until air currents displace it or it is ignited.

As required by section 171 of the Occupational Health and Safety Code, propane cylinders must be secured, preferably upright. Workers using propane-fuelled equipment must be trained in how to safely use and operate it. This requirement includes how to refuel it and how to safely shut down the equipment in an emergency. Workers refueling cylinders must ensure that the engine, pilot lights and other equipment within the vehicle that could provide a source of ignition are extinguished or switched off.

Before turning on the propane, workers should confirm that all delivery system connections are tight, that all boiler valves are turned off and that any unconnected outlets are capped. The propane delivery system should not be left on and no containers should be connected to it until the system has been proven to be propane-tight. After the propane has been turned on, all pilot lights must be lit.

Each connection of the propane delivery system must be periodically leak tested with soapy water. A lit match or other open flame must never be used when checking for leaks. Workers need to understand that if they suspect a leak or smell the rotten egg odour, they must immediately turn off the supply of propane at the cylinder and leave the area. Once well away from the vehicle, workers can contact their employer for further instructions, which may involve calling 911 and indicating the presence of a possible propane gas leak.

*For more information on the requirements of how to use propane water heaters and boilers safely, go to http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_al037.pdf.*

# YOUR SECRET WEAPON TO COMBAT INJURY LOSSES

## A MODIFIED WORK PROGRAM CAN RETAIN EMPLOYEES, SAVE YOU MONEY, IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND BOOST EMPLOYEE MORALE

**by WCB-Alberta**

Employees who are injured pose a huge labour challenge for employers. You need them back at work, and they need a healthy recovery. These two sets of needs can actually complement each other by working together. That's what modified (transitional) work does. The injured worker is slowly and safely reintegrated back to work and in many cases will recuperate better than by staying at home.

**1. Employees get back to work faster**
Studies show only 50 per cent of injured workers who are off work longer than six months will ever return to work. If they are off longer than a year, only 10 per cent of them will ever return to work. Prevent that damaging spiral by getting them back to work in a slow and safe recovery program.

**2. Positive outlook**
Workers spend more waking hours with co-workers during the week than they do with their families. An extended leave away from the workplace can lead to a sense of alienation, of being forgotten by co-workers. Getting injured workers back to the job sooner keeps them feeling a part of their workplace.

**3. Improved self-worth by continuing work routine**
Most of us benefit from a daily routine, such as going to work each day. When the work routine is changed, other routines take its place. Staying at home too long can make a normally productive person take on a sick role, become dependent, be understimulated, feel stigmatized and become increasingly frustrated.

**4. Faster recovery from injury**
In sports medicine, injured professional athletes work at getting better through a series of focused exercises designed to harden the injured muscles back to their original condition to prevent stiffening. Doing a lighter version of the same job for a modified period provides "work hardening" for the employee's muscles.

**5. Retain their experience and save money**
The loss of an employee's services creates a hole in a company's operations, requiring co-workers to put in extra hours. If they are hourly employees, doing so usually means overtime at time-and-a-half, or even double time. The sooner the injured worker is back on the job, the sooner that overtime can be eliminated. There is also less chance for injury caused by fatigue as a result of employees working additional hours.

**Modified work** is a simple, cost-effective way to retain your employees, boost employee morale and reduce your productivity costs. WCB-Alberta can help you create a modified work program. To set up your program, contact www.wcb.ab.ca.

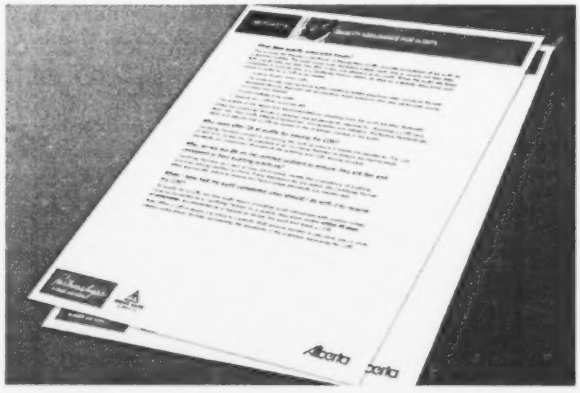
# PARTNERSHIPS NEWS

**Partnerships 20 years later**

It's been 20 years since a small group of dedicated employers elected to participate in a new, voluntary program designed to initiate the development of formal health and safety programs and reduce the number of workplace incidents and injuries in Alberta. A radical concept at the time, the Partnerships in Health and Safety program has experienced a marked increase in popularity since its introduction in 1989. The number of participating employers continues to grow. To date, over 7500 employers, representing over 50 per cent of the province's payroll, maintain an active Certificate of Recognition. Partnerships' success has also inspired the introduction of similar programs in other provinces.

But the size of the program is not the only thing that has changed over the past two decades. In 1999, a consistent Partnerships Audit Standard was approved by the Certifying Partners, and the Workers' Compensation Board introduced the updated Partners in Injury Reduction program, providing COR holders with access to financial incentives. Three years later, in 2002, the first Partnership Quality Assurance Standards were introduced, requiring Certifying Partners to develop and implement more rigorous quality assurance processes. The years that followed saw the program continue to evolve, with the introduction of COR maintenance options designed to promote continuous improvement of health and safety systems. The recent implementation of more specific training and quality assurance standards will ensure more consistency in training and review standards among Certifying Partners.

Program stakeholders continue to explore ways to enhance the effect of the Partnerships program, and significant changes to the audit standards are currently under discussion. To celebrate 20 successful years, and to recognize the common goals of Partnerships and the



WCB's PIR program, the most immediate change took place in April 2009, when both programs were rebranded under the name Partnerships in Injury Reduction. The change enables us to move forward with a more consistent message: we are all working together to improve workplace health and safety for Albertans.

**Audit report shortcuts**

As the demand for health and safety audits increases, Certifying Partner quality assurance processes are more frequently identifying audit report writing practices that could reduce the quality and value of employer audit reports. Report templating—a technique involving the use of a ready-made template to compose an audit report—is one questionable practice.

Re-using pre-crafted, ready-made notes, suggestions and strengths may seem harmless, but templating affects the auditor's results in a number of ways. For example, templated notes and suggestions are by necessity very general in nature. They fail to offer the employer the level

of information they should be getting about the status of their specific operation. Also, auditors who use a ready-made template may miss issues that are outside the findings they have pre-prepared before visiting the work site, and which they have probably been using for a long time. Employers paying for an auditor's expertise should expect a customized report that clearly identifies what was found and explains what specific improvements should be made to the operation's health and safety system.

Another danger of templating is that it can lead to a practice we refer to as boilerplating. Boilerplating involves using the same report, copied virtually word for word, as the deliverable for more than one employer audit. In some cases, all that will differentiate one boilerplate report from another is the name of the employer, the employer's description and sampling data, and the audit dates. This practice not only places an auditor in violation of their code of ethics, but it is considered to be fraudulent, because the results received (and in many cases, paid for) by the employer do not reflect the actual state of the employer's health and safety system.

Employers are encouraged to read their audit reports carefully. They should call their Certifying Partner if audit report results don't seem relevant to their operation or if the latest report seems eerily similar to one from a previous year. Auditors who violate their code of ethics are subject to discipline by their Certifying Partners, and they could have their certification suspended permanently.

### Is that COR valid?

All copies of a COR have an expiry date printed in the lower right corner of the certificate. As more project owners and employers require contractors to hold a valid COR to either bid for or perform work, the incidence of altered, modified and expired CORs being submitted in bid packages has increased.

*The status of a COR can be verified quickly and easily online by visiting our website at employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PS_COR.pdf.*

Partnerships in INJURY REDUCTION

Partnerships in Injury Reduction is a non-regulatory, province-wide injury prevention program sponsored co-operatively by government, labour and industry. The program offers:

- tools to implement a health and safety management system
- guidance in applying for a Certificate of Recognition (COR)
- potential for premium rebates from the Workers' Compensation Board-Alberta

For more information, call the Partnerships Hotline at 1-866-415-8690 or visit employment.alberta.ca/whs-partnerships/.

## WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

**Contact us any time**
For occupational health and safety information and assistance, or to order Workplace Health and Safety publications, phone the Contact Centre at
1-866-415-8690
780-415-8690 in Edmonton and area
e-mail whs@gov.ab.ca

WORK SAFE ALBERTA

**Sign up for Workplace Health and Safety news**
To be notified by e-mail of all new Workplace Health and Safety website postings, sign up for a FREE subscription service through employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/2984.html.

**Alberta Government Library – Labour Building Site**
To review the large selection of occupational health and safety information materials available through the Alberta government, go to employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/415.html.

To borrow materials, either contact your local library and make your requests through the inter-library loan system or visit the Alberta Government Library:

**3rd floor, 10808 - 99 Avenue**
**Edmonton, AB T5K 0G5**

**Library phone**
780-427-8533

**Audio-Visual Services phone**
780-427-4671

To reach either of the above numbers toll-free in Alberta, dial 310-0000 followed by the area code and phone number.

**Library fax** 780-422-0084

Workplace Health and Safety is an Alberta Employment and Immigration program that falls under the jurisdiction of Minister Hector Goudreau.

# 2009 WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY AWARD WINNERS

**by Wes Bellmore**

Two Alberta businesses were recently recognized for their achievements in workplace health and safety. The awards are sponsored by Work Safe Alberta and the Occupational Health and Safety Council to recognize outstanding contributions to workplace safety and to encourage others to follow the examples of the recipients.

Tim Bennett, chair of Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Council, says the awards are an important way to spread workplace safety information.

"The award allows you to share your ideas," he says. "Maybe you developed a unique process that can be shared among multiple industries; now other groups can see if they can implement that idea within their organization."

Bennett believes in the benefits of reinforcing an organization's positive attitude toward workplace safety. "If the award has an impact on the safety culture, if a company believes in the core values of safety in addition to the goods or services they provide, it will mean better productivity and less lost time."

The awards are also a source of pride for the recipients, says Bennett. "The winners can now say: 'Not only do I lead the way, I can prove it.' "

The 2009 recipients are the following:

### Leader Award

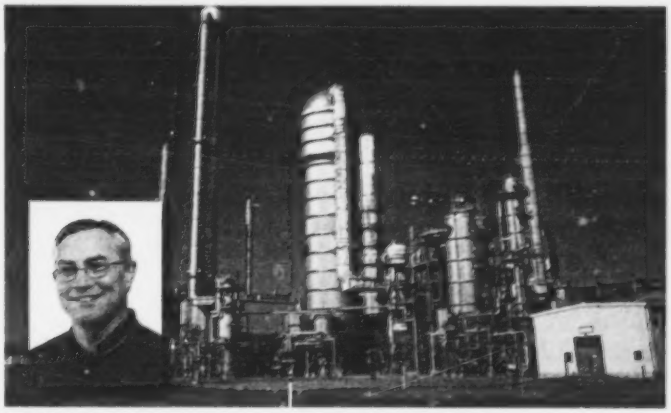
*Shell Scotford Chemicals, Paul Gabbard, general manager*

Shell Scotford Chemicals was chosen because of its industry leadership in creating a safe workplace. "Rather than focusing on one particular thing for this award, we look at a company's overall health and safety management," says Rose Ann McGinty of Alberta Employment and Immigration.

McGinty said Shell Scotford's systematic approach to workplace safety impressed the judges. "Shell's safety processes are very well thought out, with lots of checks and balances. Their 'Goal Zero' vision for a harm-free workplace is really noteworthy."

An objective of the Leader Award is to promote awareness and adoption of good workplace health and safety practices. The award also recognizes a good track record of injury and illness prevention.

The judges also liked the inclusive nature of Shell Scotford's safety programs. "They focus on the baby steps," says McGinty, "the small changes that make a big difference, that are within everyone's control."



Paul Gabbard

Shell Scotford general manager Paul Gabbard believes safety is an ongoing process. "Each day we need to be committed to our goal of no harm to anyone," he says. "We pause to celebrate what we've accomplished, but the most important thing is that we look forward to working safely today and tomorrow."

### Innovation Award

*PikSafe International, Henry Dekort, president*

PikSafe International earned this year's Innovation Award for developing a simple and effective plastic guard that slips over the handle of a pickaxe to protect the user from flying debris.

Even in our high-tech age, a pickaxe is the best tool for some tasks. Swinging a pickaxe can be backbreaking and, according to the PikSafe website, it can also be tooth-breaking. A close-up photo of an unlucky worker's shattered front tooth illustrates the damage that flying rocks and concrete chips can do to your smile.

Henry Dekort, a Calgary home builder, says the idea for the PikSafe occurred to him in 2007 after seeing one of his son's friends lose a front tooth after clearing frozen ice from a driveway.

As they were assessing the damage to the man's smile, one of Dekort's contract bobcat operators came over. They could see that he, too, had a missing front tooth, which, he said, was from the use of a pick.

The PikSafe

"It was my youngest son who said we should come up with a shield to protect the workers," says Dekort. "I thought, 'Why didn't we think of this a long time ago? We can save people a lot of damage to their teeth and their faces.' "

The innovation was a team effort between Dekort and his two sons.

The Innovation Award recognizes forward-thinking ideas that create a safer work environment. Award objectives are to acknowledge efforts to prevent workplace incidents, injuries and illnesses and to encourage policies or projects that will improve worker health and safety.

"One of the interesting things about our award recipients this year," says McGinty, "is that PikSafe is a small company. Their win in this category shows that a safety innovation does not have to be big and dramatic to be the best."

**Performance Improvement Award**
*Not awarded for 2009*

This award is to recognize significant improvement in a company's health and safety program and reduction in injuries and illness, and to promote good workplace health and safety practices.

The awards luncheon was held on April 14, 2009, at Government House in Edmonton.

*Wes Bellmore is an Edmonton writer.*

RESOURCES

**WEB LINKS**

employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/5360.html
Workplace Health and Safety Awards

www.hre.gov.ab.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-WSA_application.pdf
Application information

# THE ECONOMY AND INDUSTRIAL SAFETY

**by Bob Christie**

Pick up any paper these days and you can see that the economy is on everyone's mind. Prices and profits are down, which could lead to pressure from management to reduce input costs.

Management may be tempted to find those cost savings by cutting corners, reducing maintenance, reducing crew sizes and cutting back on essential training. And individual workers, who are also experiencing increased pressure, may be willing to go along to keep their jobs.

I don't have easy answers, but I do know that cutting corners is short sighted and costly for management. Incidents cost. Safety pays.

If you are in management, use this slowdown as an opportunity to train, maintain and develop systems that increase productivity while ensuring workplace safety. If you are someone who is "on the tools," do not be stampeded into taking risks to keep your job.

I have a friend in the heavy equipment construction business. During a previous downturn, he found himself without jobs, except for a little time and materials work. He could have cut his prices to win a bigger job or two, but he elected not to wear out his equipment just to turn over cash flow. He kept a small crew on the job and they maintained, welded, repainted and even did upholstery. When the market turned around, he had a fleet that was in top-notch condition, while many of his competitors were dragging around worn out equipment.

This economy will turn around again. Let's use this time to make ready for the future.

Speaking of the future, I am searching for innovations in health and safety. I know there are good products and systems out there, so please let me know about them. You can reach me at bchristie@shaw.ca.

*Bob Christie, recently retired, was a founder and partner at Christie Communications Ltd. He supplies most of the web link resources for the articles in this magazine.*

# YOU WANT ME TO LIFT HOW MUCH?

**by Ray Cislo**

As with the other provinces and territories in Canada, Alberta has no specific law regarding the maximum weight a worker can lift. Despite what some people may think, restricting loads to a particular weight does not guarantee safety. A person might injure themselves simply by reaching awkwardly to pick up a very light load, or by slipping and losing their balance while lifting or carrying a modest load.

It's difficult to come up with a single "safe" weight limit for lifting. It's pretty obvious that people differ greatly in terms of their age, health, skill and strength. It's also clear that objects being lifted (and lowered) can vary greatly in terms of their size, shape and texture. Lifting and handling a 25 kilogram dog or a sloshing tank of water is much different than lifting the same weight in a relatively small box with well-placed handholds.

A number of workplace factors can contribute to the possibility of injury:

- the distance between the object being lifted and the front of the body
- the number of lifts performed repeatedly
- the duration of the lifting activity
- the starting height from which the object is lifted
- the finishing height to which the object is lifted
- the extent to which the body twists during the activity

Many years ago, the U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health developed a lifting equation to set a recommended weight limit for one person under different conditions. The resulting NIOSH lifting equation established a maximum load of 51 pounds (23 kilograms) under ideal conditions, which was then adjusted to account for most of the workplace factors listed above. Several organizations have developed online lifting calculators based on the work originally done by NIOSH. A listing of these calculators and where to find them on the Internet is shown at the end of this article.

As with all of these calculators, the resulting answer should be used cautiously to guide decision-making. Avoid using the resulting number as the answer. For certain jobs and industries, it may be very difficult to design tasks that the majority of workers can do. The calculators can be used to "try out" different lifting scenarios to get an idea of how safe the lifts will be to perform. The results may also suggest that no worker should be performing the lift—the work should be redesigned or done with appropriate equipment.

Here are a few points to think about before using the calculators:

- Any job that is already creating worker injuries should be thoroughly reviewed and may need to be redesigned.
- Any lifting or lowering task that requires bending, particularly deep bending with the knees and back, places additional stress on the body. The starting height and finishing height of the lift (or lower) should be re-evaluated.
- Twisting places uneven stresses on the back and can cause injury.
- The calculators do not normally deal with single-handed lifts. Such lifts place uneven forces on the back and can cause injury.
- To understand the calculators and their limitations, users should have some ergonomics training.

*Ray Cislo, P.Eng., B.Sc.(H.K.), is a safety engineering specialist at Alberta Employment and Immigration.*

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Liberty Mutual Manual Materials Handling Tables

**www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/Ergonomics/ServicesResources/Tools/LiftingCalculator3/ergo_worksheetIE.htm**
State of Washington, Department of Labor and Industries: Lifting Calculator

**www.ohiobwc.com/employer/programs/safety guide/liftguide.asp?txtCID=51122426**
Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

# VOLUNTEERS BRING NAOSH WEEK ALIVE

**by Cory Schachtel**

Volunteers from Alberta's safety industry were gearing up all spring for the annual, continent-wide week of safety promotion. The North American Occupational Safety and Health Week relies on volunteers from all industries in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico to get out the message of health and safety at the workplace. NAOSH Week was May 3–9.

"The continued success of NAOSH is directly related to the efforts of the volunteers and the support of their employers," says Ron Davis, chairman of the regional committee for NAOSH and the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering. "It really is all about the volunteers. Their enthusiasm has kept the week going and made it huge."

> "But the more this week is promoted, the more safety in general—at work, at home, on the road—becomes second nature. That is the ultimate goal."
>
> — Richard Dulong, volunteer

Recruiting the volunteers is one of the many responsibilities of Sarah King, co-chair of the Edmonton NAOSH chapter and business development coordinator for St. John's Ambulanc . "We have about 12–15 volunteers in the Edmonton chapter, depending on the year," she says. "Some are from the University of Alberta, the Alberta government, oil and gas companies, and safety officers. They are all excited to volunteer and they play a huge role. Without the volunteers, there is no NAOSH Week."

NAOSH Week focuses on employees and those in the safety industry, but its greater goal is to promote safety during the rest of the year. Trevor Archibald, a repeat NAOSH volunteer from BP Canada Energy Company, sees improvements. "My take on the evolution of health and safety is that companies used to implement it because they had to," he says. "Then they realized it was good for business. Now, I believe, they're doing it because it's important. That's not to say we don't have more work ahead—people still get hurt, or worse, on the job—but to say we've made improvements in the last 10 years is undeniable."

Richard Dulong, a volunteer from Safetech Consulting Group, says there is a shared sentiment among all those involved with NAOSH Week and the safety industry. "We believe in what we do," says Dulong. "I personally may not have saved a life, but I've certainly made lives easier. Promoting safety can be an uphill battle, at times, since most people don't think about it until something happens to them. But the more this week is promoted, the more safety in general—at work, at home, on the road—becomes second nature. That is the ultimate goal."

While the involvement of three countries speaks to the universality of worker safety, NAOSH Week started much smaller and much closer to home.

In 1986 Davis was in Medicine Hat, where the CSSE ran the Canadian Occupational Health and Safety Week for 10 years. During labour discussions at the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, Canada's representative mentioned COHS Week as something the U.S. and Mexico should consider joining. By 1997, all three countries were on board, and NAOSH was formed under the guidance of the CSSE.

"It started low key," says Davis. "Back when it was the COHS Week we had a few activities in the [Medicine Hat] mall. But things picked up after a few years and it caught on across the province. Other chapters popped up and brought in bigger numbers and more corporate involvement."

This year's theme was "Make it home safe every day," and the week consisted of interactive activities, presentations and guest speakers, as well as a calendar and video contest for school kids.

*Cory Schachtel is an Edmonton-based writer.*

## RESOURCES

### WEB LINKS

**www.naosh.ca**
North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

**www.csse.org/content/naosh/index.asp**
Canadian Society of Safety Engineering: NAOSH Week

**www.asse.org/newsroom/naosh09/what-is-naosh-week.php**
American Society of Safety Engineers: NAOSH Week

# MULTI-GENERATIONAL WORKPLACE SAFETY

## HOW TO KEEP ALL AGES WORKING TOGETHER SAFELY

**by Don Buchanan**

What do you do if you hold an eight-hour safety course on a Saturday and less than half your staff shows up? You rework the course into different formats, of course, so it will fit the learning style of each "generation" in your workforce.

It might sound like a lot of work, but if your company takes health and safety seriously, it has to make sure the training works for everyone.

"Baby Boomers typically learn better in lecture style, role modelling or one-on-one training of some kind," says Brian Clarke, CSP, safety director for Hoffman Construction in Portland, Oregon. He says the Boomers on your staff may be fine with a Saturday course, but the Nexters may resent that intrusion on their time.

"Nexters are well adapted to learning and retaining information via the Internet or other electronic tools," says Clarke. "Offering that eight hours of content as online training for younger workers may be a more effective option for them."

Clarke has made three presentations at different Alberta safety conferences in recent years, and one of his key messages is that the multi-generation workforce is a diversity issue.

"An employer's approaches to safety training and OHS practices should definitely be considered within the context of having multiple generations in the workforce," he says.

Clarke has worked with people from ages 24 to 70, and he says each age group or generation has different experience levels, attitudes and memories (see sidebar).

> "A 50-year-old worker who gets suspended for two days for breaking a safety rule will usually take the discipline seriously. But a Gen Yer may accept it easily and use the two days to go snowboarding."
>
> —Brian Clarke, safety director

Each generation also has different learning styles and different work expectations, says Clarke. "Their generational attitudes can affect how they view safety, how they respond to safety rules and what the outcomes are on the job site.... For safety training and compliance purposes, employers need to know the learning styles that are common to each generation."

Rex Swettenham, vice-president of corporate safety for

Graham Construction, notes that the generational learning issue is a factor not only when training their Project Safety Coordinators, but also when the PSCs themselves are in the field working with front line employees of all ages, whether Boomers, Gen Xers or Nexters.

"Over the course of a year, we typically engage about 50 PSCs on different projects. For the PSCs, we look at their computer and communications skills, their working knowledge of a site and their knowledge of OHS practices and regulations, among other qualifications. Our safety management system is computerized, so we teach them more computer skills as needed," says Swettenham.

"We generally find that the PSCs need training from our corporate people to help them improve their communications skills. These skills are needed so the PSCs can better engage workers of all ages and get buy-in for safety practices, rather than just spend their time only pointing out rules or problems."

Swettenham suggests that provincial statistics generally indicate that Nexter workers are most typically at the highest risk of injury. "We spend a lot of time on training and skill development for our workers under the age of 30, particularly those under the age of 25."

Cameron Nicolson, director of safety management systems for the Calgary Airport Authority, says that the age of each worker is not the only concern. "No matter what age they are, the critical point is to effectively engage the worker in the occupational health and safety messages you are delivering. For example, the age factor may not necessarily be any more important than the type of learner the person is, their language skills or cultural background."

"Each person has a different learning style and method of processing the information. The amount of repetition is also a factor in the success of any training."

Dennis Wiens, director of human resource services at PCL, confirms his company has made a conscious effort over the last few years to deliver training in a way that meets the learning styles of younger workers and more experienced workers. "We still do a significant amount of face-to-face training, but we also have e-learning tools in place."

When it comes to safety-related discipline, Clarke says that what worked for Boomers in the past may not work for Nexters. "A 50-year-old worker who gets suspended for two days for breaking a safety rule will usually take the discipline seriously. But a Nexter may accept it easily and use the two days to go snowboarding. So the attitudes and values are not the same in different generations."

*Continued on pg. 16*

## TALKIN' 'BOUT THE GENERATIONS

Do you remember the classic 1965 song "My Generation" by The Who? If you do, you are likely a Baby Boomer, or possibly part of Generation Jones or the Silent Generation. If you found the song in your parents' old record collection, heard it on a rock 'n' roll history radio program or downloaded it from the Internet, then you're likely from Gen X or a Nexter.

**Silent Generation**

- born between 1925 and 1945
- too young to have served in the military during World War II
- their fathers may have served in World War I

**Baby Boomers**

- born between 1946 and 1954
- part of a large increase in birth rate worldwide
- mostly experienced their teen and college years in the 1960s

**Generation Jones**

- born between 1955 and 1964
- sometimes included within the overall Baby Boomer category, but now generally considered a distinct generation
- mostly experienced their teen years in the 1970s

**Generation X**

- sometimes referred to as the Baby Bust
- born between 1965 and 1979
- part of a period of low birth rate in the Western world
- mostly children of Baby Boomers and the Silent Generation
- mostly experienced their teen years in the late 1970s and 1980s

**Nexters (Generation Y)**

- sometimes referred to as Millennials, Echo-Boomers or Echo Generation
- born between 1980 and 1995
- tech-savvy; part of the digital generation
- children of the Baby Boomer generation
- make up about 25 per cent of the Canadian population
- generally considered the largest North American generation in the last 100 years, outnumbering even the Baby Boomers
- generally expected to have large worldwide impact, socially and economically
- considered to be more affluent, better educated and more ethnically diverse than any previous generation
- want to do meaningful work, achieve work and personal goals, and have ample free time away from work
- mostly experienced their teen years in the late 1990s and 2000s

*Continued from pg. 15*

According to Clarke—and a multitude of resources on the Internet—Nexters are well on their way to having a huge impact in the North American workplace. The experts suggest that employers, human resources personnel and those responsible for workplace safety management need to know how to effectively understand and manage Nexters.

"One of the best ways to retain Nexter staff is to offer them training and professional development of transferable skills, such as management or organizational skills. This is one way to build loyalty and keep them within the company for a longer period," says Clarke.

"Nexter workers place a lot of value on their time. For them it's not just about money, plus they do not want the kind of work life that they saw their fathers experience," says Clarke. "They don't want to work 25 or more years for the same company and retire with a gold watch or a plaque."

Clarke offers a final comment that every employer would be wise to review all aspects of their safety programs, including training, discipline and incentives, to ensure each program element is effective in addressing different generational concerns.

*Don Buchanan is an Edmonton writer.*

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Generation Y Safety

**www.mysafework.com/blogs/2008/03/04/try-asking-your-gen-x-y-employees-mike**
Try asking your Gen X, Y employees up to the mike

**www.theiacp.org/documents/pdfs/Publications/BP-GenXRecruits.pdf**
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**www.ossa.com/documents/newsletter/Vol5no4(final).pdf**
Safety Mosaic (Baby Boomers and Safety)

**www.cos-mag.com/index.php/Reader-Panel-Archive/Reader-Panel-Safety-The-Next-Generation.html**
Canadian Occupational Safety magazine: Survey about the Next Generation

**www.meridian-inc.com/hm/content/continuing_education_units/shared_assets/files/ceu_selfstudy_embracing_boomers.pdf**
Embracing Boomers: How Workplace Design for Maturing Knowledge Workers Benefits Everyone

### SUGGESTED READING

***Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers and Nexters in Your Workplace***, by Zemke, Raines and Filipczak

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**(For contact information, see page 9.)**

### VIDEO

***Awesome! Engaging and Managing Generation Y*** **(DHD 030)**
This two-part, video-based training program can help you better prepare for the task of engaging, inspiring and productively channelling the energies of your new employees.

**Part 1,** ***"A New Generation @ Work,"*** presents 24 Gen Y employees from a wide range of occupations.

**Part 2,** ***"Engaging Gen Y,"*** introduces five managers who present their views on how to help Nexters succeed.

***Generations: M.E.E.T. for Respect in the Workplace*** **(DHD 004)**
***Managing Generations: M.E.E.T. for Respect in the Workplace*** **(DHD 005)**
These programs tackle the complexities of effectively working in a multi-age workforce. They also provide insights and strategies that will minimize generational conflict, promote respect and strengthen communication and collaboration to make any workplace more productive.

***Managing Generation Xers*** **(HRV 135)**
A Generation Xer has a unique set of characteristics and brings to work a completely different set of ideals. Generation Xers are very secure and tend to focus on their skills rather than job security. This video will provide valuable information about what makes them tick, and more importantly, how to manage them for optimum results.

# THE RISKS OF BEING YOUNG IN THE WORKPLACE

## PROTECTING YOUNG WORKERS FROM INJURY

**by Cheryl Mahaffy**

Michelle Colleton's passion for the safety of young workers took root March 7, 1991. That was the day her brother Sandy was killed by five tonnes of metal in a fabrication shop. Her voice still shakes when she describes how the apprentice welder climbed a poorly designed trolley day after day to unhook rigging from sheets of metal as they were hauled inside the shop. A crane knocked over the final sheet before he could move out of the way. Her brother was so disfigured that the medical examiner advised the family not to view the body.

> "Young workers, especially 16- to 18-year-olds, think they're invincible."
>
> — John Hudson, Peak Energy Services

The health and safety officer involved in her brother's case challenged Colleton to do something with the rage she felt at the circumstances surrounding Sandy's death. She set aside her studies in political science to take occupational health and safety training at Ryerson and then at McGill. Colleton is now health and hygiene team leader for BP Canada Energy Company in Calgary. She says her desire to keep young Alberta workers safe is all the more acute now that she is a mother.

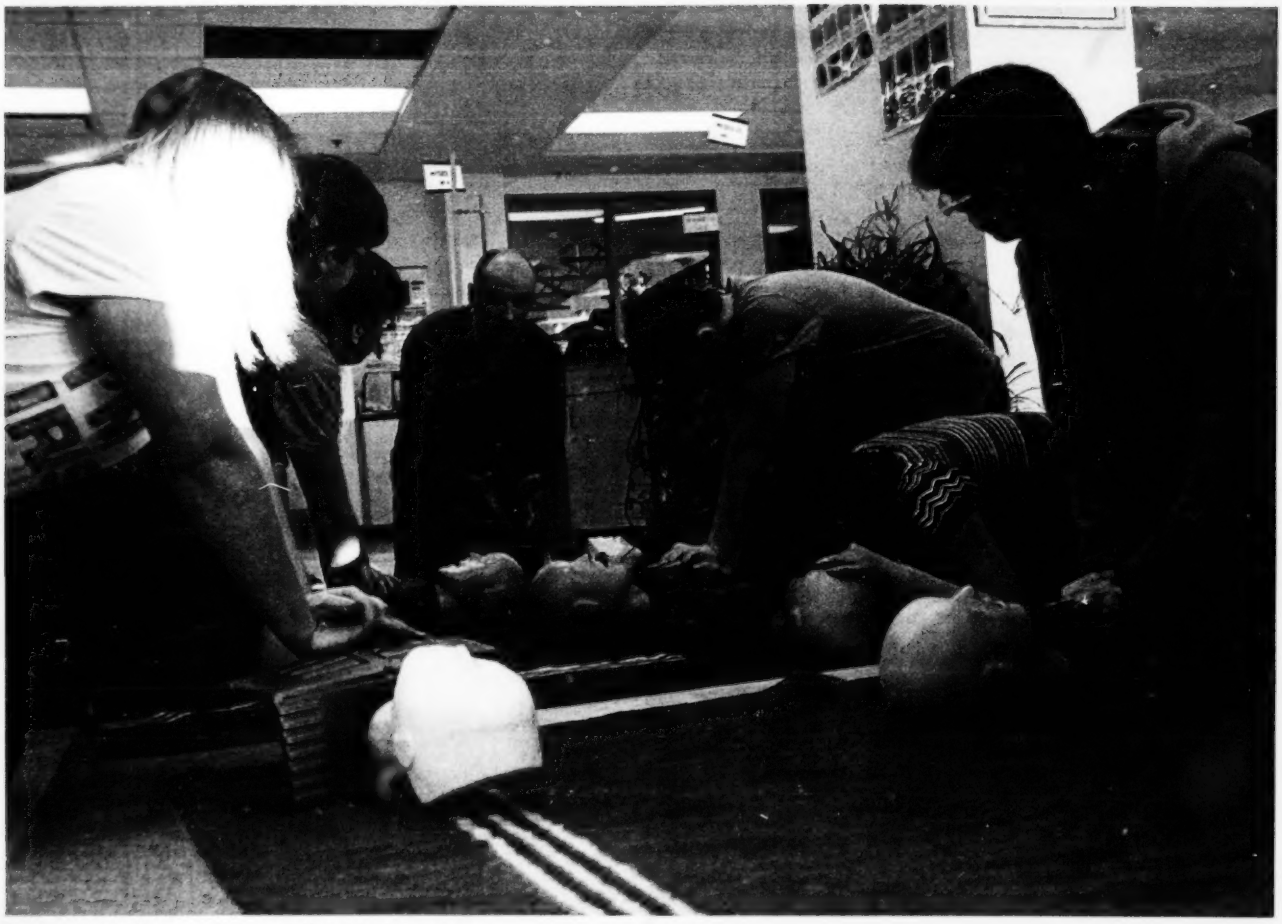
"I only have 10 years until my son is going to be working," she says. "Certainly, I don't want to receive that phone call again."

In a typical year, nine parents receive that fateful call across Alberta; another 7250 young workers suffer lost-time claim injuries. In fact, workers younger than 25 are 33 per cent more likely than the norm to be injured on the job.

### Young workers take chances

"Young workers, especially 16- to 18-year-olds, think they're invincible. And they don't know what they don't know," says John Hudson, vice president of Health, Safety, Environment and Risk Management at Peak Energy Services in Calgary. "They want to do a great job, so they're almost too willing, too much in a hurry. They'll take a chance—and they may not think it's a big chance—or they're scared to question something they think is unsafe. Unfortunately, by not speaking up, they can be walking right into a hazard."

Given those realities, and given the life-shifting consequence of each death and injury, what can parents, employers, schools and youth do to keep more young workers safe?



Photos by Frank Sdao, from St. Joseph's High School, Edmonton

It's a question that wakes Dr. Michael Alpern up at night, and that's a good thing. He is one of the founders and executive director of the Job Safety Skills Society, a not-for-profit partnership of industry, education and government. It formed in the early 1990s with the aim of integrating safety training into junior high and high school curriculum. Together with Alberta Education, the society has developed safety courses that junior high and high school students across Alberta can take for credit as part of Alberta Education's Career and Technology Studies program. Teachers have access to a provincially approved curriculum, in-service training and online learning modules. They can check out safety videos from Alberta Education's regional resource centres, including some (such as Work Safe Alberta's bloodylucky.ca video clips) that are calculated to shock. Post-secondary institutions also can request custom training packages. And it's all free of charge.

"When we started, the safety of young workers wasn't anywhere on the agenda," says Alpern. "Now almost every province has launched a youth-focused safety initiative."

In Alberta, more than 25,000 students at 650 schools enrolled in CTS safety courses this year. Students who achieve at least 70 per cent in one or more of three courses receive Job Safety Skills Society credentials that boost their potential for being hired as well as being safe.

**Training students to be safe**

Jobsite safety for youth zipped to the top of Deb Meraw's priority list about 13 years ago when she moved into her current post as coordinator of off-campus education at St. Joseph's High School in Edmonton. "Honestly, I couldn't even sleep at night, I was so overwhelmed with the responsibility of looking after the safety of other people's children on the job," she recalls.

> "When they're little, they really do learn stuff. I don't think there's any age too young to learn about safety."
>
> —Michelle Colleton

Meraw shared her fears with a brother-in-law who owns a construction firm in Drayton Valley. "Train your students to be safe," he replied. "I wish workers would come to me with safety training."

Taking that advice to heart, Meraw and her colleagues incorporated safety wherever it made sense in St. Joseph's self-directed curriculum. First aid and CPR are now integral to physical education classes, hazardous materials training (WHMIS) is mandatory in science labs, woodworking students take construction safety training

(CSTS) and students who work off campus must be JobSafe certified.

It's crucial that employers reinforce the training by matching students with mentors who appreciate safety and by refusing to overlook safety lapses, says Meraw. Certain trades demand recertification every year, for example, but some students neglect to recertify. "I've had employers call Johnny into the office and say, 'Turn around and come back when you're recertified.' When you're in the first step toward a career that you may be in your entire life, that's a powerful lesson."

Equally affirming, says Meraw, are the questions students raise once they're on the job. "They'll phone and say, 'I'm in a situation here; can you back me up?' When students start to assess their work with that critical thinking and speak up, I don't think it gets any better than that."

In High River, Highwood School Principal Stacey Meyer tells similar success stories. Just three years after making safety training mandatory for off-campus and many on-campus courses, Highwood School earned applause from the Job Safety Skills Society in 2008 for graduating the most safety-certified students in Alberta. With safety savvy students, the school is enjoying injury-free welding and woodworking workshops. One student applied his training to his family's feedlot, spotting several safety concerns that his parents happily addressed.

**Ready to work safely**

"Community spin-off is positive as well," says Meyer. "The word is that kids who qualify for our registered apprenticeship program are sometimes heads and tails above other employees in terms of job safety. They show up ready for work, complete with steel-toed boots, hardhats and safety goggles. Employers like that, especially in this day and age when things move a little too fast."

A recent visit to a high school in southern Alberta told Michelle Colleton that, more than two decades after her brother's death, a low level of awareness about safety persists in some quarters. As students described work sites where they climb above 3 metres without fall protection and apply herbicides and pesticides without respiratory protection, her desire to shield her own children and others from such dangers redoubled.

"I'm constantly ensuring the safety of my child," she says. "Yet when he's 18 I'm going to send that child to an employer who has no health and safety management system in place to make sure he will return to me safely? It's not going to happen in my house."

Besides advocating for shifts in attitudes and promoting safety training as a board member of the Job Safety Skills Society, Colleton is determined to prepare her children for their working years by modelling safety. She wears steel-toed boots and safety glasses when mowing the lawn, makes sure her son Theo's bed stands directly underneath

## TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUTH SAFE AT WORK

**Tips for parents**

1. Live safe at home.
2. Give reasons for your rules.
3. Encourage questions at home and at work.
4. Make sure your child receives safety training.
5. Check the safety record of your child's employer.
6. Visit your child's work site to assess whether it is safe.

**Tips for schools**

1. Require safety training before all off-campus placements.
2. Integrate safety into lab, shop, physical education, foods and other relevant courses.
3. Support safety training with time and a solid curriculum.
4. Offer seminars to help parents assess work site safety.

**Tips for employers**

1. Know the safety rules for your sector and follow or exceed them.
2. Make sure young workers receive proper health and safety orientation and training.
3. Make sure your young workers have safe mentors.
4. Invite questions and answer them honestly.
5. Give and take suggestions in a positive, constructive way.
6. Don't assume that youth know the things that seem common sense to you.

**Tips for young workers**

1. Make sure your safety training fits the job.
2. Use all required personal protective gear.
3. Know and follow the rules, even if others don't.
4. Take responsibility for keeping the work environment safe.
5. Assess the risks and have a plan to deal with them.
6. If a situation appears too risky, speak up. You have a duty to refuse to do unsafe work.
7. Be positive and constructive in how you give and take suggestions.
8. Never hesitate to ask questions.

his rock climbing wall, and gives safety demonstrations to his Boy Scout troop. The list goes on.

What's more, the lessons stick. Colleton recalls lecturing Theo's ball team about avoiding pinch points after he got pinned under a teeter totter that was weighted down by his teammates. "My son understood that pinch point concept by experiencing it. My three-year-old daughter, who was on my hip at the time, was not my target audience. But just a month ago as we were getting some firewood, she saw a little piece of hardware with a hinge on it, and she's like, 'Mom, this is a pinch point.' When they're little, they really do learn stuff. I don't think there's any age too young to learn about safety."

*Cheryl Mahaffy is an Edmonton writer whose work appears in several anthologies, including the 2006 release,* Big Enough Dreams.

## ASKING YOUR BOSS FIVE EASY QUESTIONS COULD SAVE YOU A WORLD OF HURT AT WORK

1. How can I be injured doing my job?
2. What safety procedures do I need to follow?
3. Who will give me safety training?
4. Do I need any safety gear?
5. What happens if I get hurt?

Source: **Bloodylucky.ca**

## RESOURCES

### WEB LINKS

**employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/5369.html**
Workplace Health and Safety: New and Young Workers

**www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/YoungWorker/FAQ.asp**
Work Safe BC: Young Worker Frequently Asked Questions

**www.alis.gov.ab.ca/ep/careershop/showproduct.html?EntityKey=1384**
X-treme Safety: A Survival Guide for New and Young Workers

**www.ccohs.ca/youngworkers**
CCOHS campaign: Resources for parents, teachers, employers, employees; has links to other sites

**employment.alberta.ca/cps/rde/xchg/hre/hs.xsl/352.html**
Alberta information for parents, employers, teachers, young workers

**www.hre.gov.ab.ca/whs/network/hstopics/youngworkers/index.asp**
Work Safe Alberta Information Sharing Network: New and Young Workers

**bloodylucky.ca**
BloodyLucky (Work Safe Alberta): videos for teens

**www.jobsafetyskills.com**
Job Safety Skills Society

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### VIDEO

***Young and New Workers: They Are Worth Your Attention*** **(DVD 031)**
Young and new workers need special attention because they are more at risk of injury than their older and more experienced counterparts. This program profiles young and new worker programs at 13 B.C. companies.

***Lost Youth: Four Stories of Injured Young Workers*** **(VC 0365)**
Michael, Jennifer, John and Nick all speak of losing their youth after suffering serious workplace accidents. Through recreations of these accidents and one-on-one discussions with the young people and their parents, this program tells four stories of lives forever altered.

***Dying to Work*** **(VC 0345)**
W-Five reporter Wei Chen examines the perils of teen labour and discovers an astounding statistic: on average, one young worker in Canada dies on the job each week and 60,000 young workers are injured each year. The program follows David Ellis's father as he campaigns for tougher safety rules and tries to make teenagers aware of the risks.

***Supervisor (The)***
This program is a docudrama that examines a supervisor's responsibility for workplace health and safety. It depicts the emotional, legal and financial consequences of a fictionalized workplace accident that results in the death of a young worker. The video was created to raise awareness among employers, supervisors and workers about the importance of adequate health and safety instruction for young workers, or new workers, and their supervisors. Warning: This video contains graphic scenes and profanity. Viewer discretion is advised.

WHMIS
Material
Safety
Data
Sheets

# WHAT IMPROVEMENTS HAVE YOU MADE AT YOUR WORKPLACE?

If you've found a solution worth sharing, please send it to ray.cislo@gov.ab.ca.

## COUNTERBALANCED ARM TO SUPPORT HEAVY TOOLS

**The Problem**
Heavy tools, such as portable handheld grinders, drills, riveters and torque tools, may be used constantly during a work shift. Having to support these tools in awkward positions can fatigue and injure the arms, shoulders and back.

**A Solution**
Sophisticated, counterbalanced tool holders make the tools "weightless." This solution is a quantum leap past hanging tools from the ceiling using chains or stretchy cords.

**Benefits**
Workers can avoid injury, reduce downtime from exhaustion and improve the quality of their work through more precise guidance of the tool.

## SUPPORT STANDS MAKE WORK EASIER

**The Problem**
When work materials are stored at ground level, workers have to bend or stoop to lift them, which increases the possibility of back and knee injury.

**A Solution**
Simple support stands can be used to raise material and equipment from ground level, making lifting easier.

**Benefits**
Workers can avoid awkward bending and reduce the possibility of injury during lifting and lowering activities.

# FROM THE COURTROOM

**by Brian Caruk**

### Narrowing the Crown's Burden of Proof

I don't often have the opportunity to share with you a case that may result in a truly ground-breaking decision. But the recent appeal decision from Alberta's Court of Queen's Bench in R. v. Rose's Well Services Ltd. (more commonly referred to as the Dial Oilfield Services case) clarifies the extent to which employers are obligated to protect worker safety.

The facts of the case are relatively straightforward: two workers were seriously burned while off-loading oilfield condensates from a truck's cargo tank into an aboveground storage tank. One of the workers was more senior and was training the other. Neither the truck nor the tank was grounded. The truck was parked close enough to the storage tank that flammable vapours were sucked into the truck engine, which caused the engine to over-rev and ultimately resulted in an explosion.

In convicting the partnership for failing to ensure the health and safety of the workers, the trial judge found that clear safety rules had not been established and that the workers had not been adequately trained or supervised.

In upholding the conviction, the higher Court found that in some cases the Crown can prove a breach of the Occupational Health and Safety Act simply by proving the incident. In other words, the Crown's burden is to prove that the act was committed. Then, it is for the defence to establish on a balance of probabilities that it did everything reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of the workers.

This burden is exactly what the law of strict liability and due diligence envisions, but until now it has not been stated so clearly by the Courts.

The sentence portion of the appeal is still before the Courts as I write this article, so I can't comment yet on that aspect of the case. Stay tuned.

*Brian Caruk is an Assistant Chief Prosecutor in Regulatory Prosecutions, Alberta Justice.*

# THE LAST RESORT

## REPORTING ON RECENT CONVICTIONS UNDER THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT

Between November 2008 and January 2009, three employers were convicted under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**Blue Ridge Lumber Inc.** On December 14, 2002, a young worker at Blue Ridge Lumber was seriously injured when he fell 4.24 metres through an unguarded open hatchway. Blue Ridge Lumber Inc. was found guilty on November 19, 2008, on two counts under the General Safety Regulation. It received a total penalty of $45,750: a fine of $5000 under section 21(1), a victim surcharge of $750 and a payment of $40,000 to Woodlands County for the purchase of rescue equipment for the Blue Ridge Voluntary Fire Department. The second count, under section 60, was stayed.

**Browne and Sons Plastering Ltd.** On April 7, 2006, a truck driver was seriously injured at Wainwright when he was catapulted out of the basket of a JLG manlift that he was driving onto a flatbed trailer. The manlift reached the top of the tailgate ramps, pivoted at the point of balance and then fell onto the flatbed trailer, ejecting the truck driver from the basket. Browne and Sons Plastering Ltd. pleaded guilty on December 15, 2008, to one count under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, section 2(1)(a)(i). It received a total penalty of $90,000: a fine of $5000 and a payment of $85,000 to Stars Air Ambulance.

**W. Pidhirney Welding Ltd.** On August 21, 2005, a sideboom operator was fatally injured near Grande Cache, when he was struck by a falling pipe he had snagged and dislodged from a trailer. W. Pidhirney Welding Ltd. pleaded guilty on December 22, 2008, to one count under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, section 2(1)(a)(i). It received a total penalty of $301,500: a fine of $10,000, a victim surcharge of $1500 and a payment of $290,000 to Red Deer College for the creation of an endowment fund in the name of the fatally injured worker to fund scholarships in the trades/apprenticeships program.

# WORKPLACE FATALITIES

## Investigated in Alberta

### November 1, 2008, to January 29, 2009

Workplace Health and Safety investigates most work-related incident fatalities that fall under provincial jurisdiction. In general, highway traffic, farm, disease or heart attack fatalities are not investigated. In many cases, investigation into these fatalities is continuing. Final investigation reports are filed at the Alberta Government Library–Labour Building site and can be reviewed there or at employment.alberta.ca/whs-fatalities.

Total fatalities investigated in 2008: 30

Fatalities investigated in 2009 (year-to-date, as of January 29): 4

For further information about comparing trends in fatalities over time, please see the Occupational Fatalities in Alberta report: **employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_10yr_fatal.pdf.**

**A 33-year-old male equipment operator** was fatally injured when he was pinned between the bucket of a backhoe and the box of a truck. Another worker had been positioning the backhoe on a tilt top trailer.

**A 48-year-old male process technician** was fatally injured when an ice castle (a very large chunk of ice) he was attempting to cut through with a steam line toppled over onto him. The worker had been trying to remove the ice castle from the steam tracing supply valves.

**A 46-year-old male driver**, who was strapping supplies to the back of his truck, was crushed by the trailer of a transport truck that entered the yard and went between the worker's truck and a barrier.

**A 30-year-old male millwright** apprentice was crushed when a scissor-lift loaded with plywood veneer descended on him as he was attempting to service the scissor-lift.

**A 32-year-old male well-testing supervisor** and his 27-year-old male assistant were both electrocuted when a flare stack they were raising contacted a 14,000-volt power line.

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to:
CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT
Alberta Employment and Immigration
Workplace Partnerships (Director's Office)
7th Floor, Labour Building
10808 - 99 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 0G5
E-mail whs@gov.ab.ca

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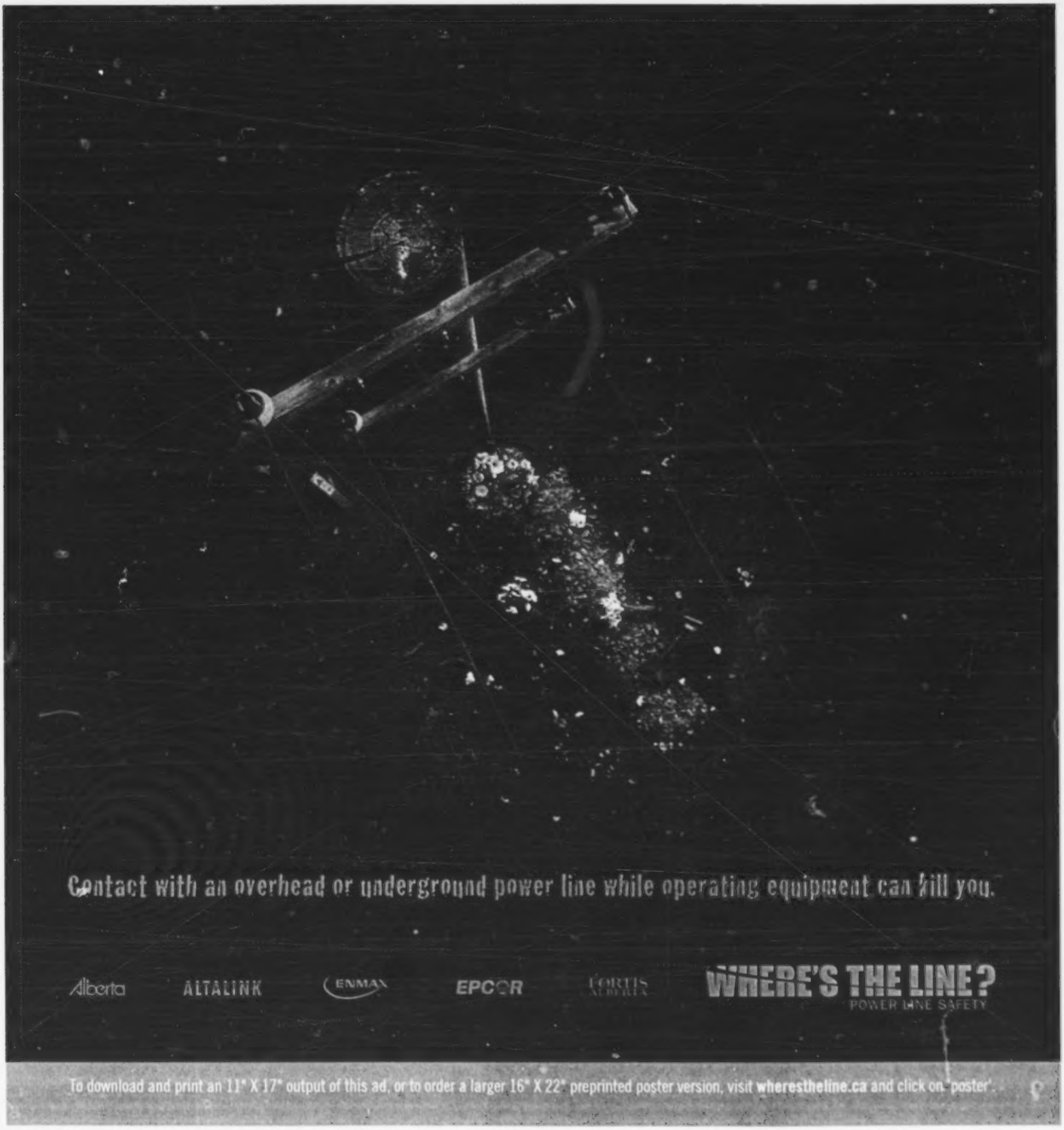
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